

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0367

BEIRUT FOR BITAR

E. O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS : EAID, BA

SUBJECT : PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS FOR BAHRAIN

REF : BEIRUT 7157; STATE 115369; MANAMA 0347

1) BEGIN SUMMARY: IT IS ESSENTIAL BAHRAIN PEACE CORPS PROGRAM
BEGIN OPERATION WITH START OF SCHOOL TERM OCTOBER 1. REDUCED
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS IS SATISFACTORY. ARABIC TRAINING
COULD BE CURTAILED FOR SERVICE IN BAHRAIN. ALL VOLUNTEERS
WITH EXCEPTION OF HOSPITAL MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR SHOULD
ARRIVE ABOUT SEPTEMBER 15. SHOULD CONTINUE EFFORTS TO
RECRUIT WELDING INSTRUCTOR AND ONE TEFL INSTRUCTOR, BUT
FINAL LIST OF VOLUNTEERS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY BY
JULY 15.
END SUMMARY.

2) NOW THAT WE HAVE CONVINCED BAHRAIN GOVT OF VALUE OF PEACE
CORPS PROGRAM, IT IS ESSENTIAL USG FOLLOW THROUGH ON ITS
COMMITMENT AND HAVE SOME VOLUNTEERS HERE AND READY TO SHOULDER
THEIR DUTIES BY SECOND HALF OF SEPTEMBER. PROGRAM WAS APPROVED
BY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AFTER MINISTERS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION
AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS OVERCAME RELUCTANCE OF TRADITIONALIST
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ELEMENT BY EXPLAINING BENEFITS OF SPECIFIC PROGRAM WORKED OUT BETWEEN THEM AND PC DIRECTOR BITAR.

3) FOR REASONS EXPLAINED BELOW SMALLER CONTINGENT OF VOLUNTEERS THAN ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED WOULD BE SATISFACTORY AND TRAINING IN ARABIC LANGUAGE COULD BE CURTAILED FOR SERVICE IN BAHRAIN. IT HAS TO BE KEPT IN MIND THAT BAHRAINNAS MORE ADVANCED THAN OMAN AND YEMEN AND DIFFERENT APPROACH CAN BE USED.

4) BELIEVE POSSIBLE CURTAILMENT OF TRAINING, IF UNAVOIDABLE, WOULD NOT RPT NOT HAVE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON PROGRAM HERE. BULK OF TRAINING WOULD BE DEVOTED TO ARABIC LANGUAGE. WITH EXCEPTION OF HOSPITAL MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR, FACILITY IN ARABIC WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS BUT IS NOT RPT NOT NECESSARY. NURSING SCHOOL IS CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH, AND ENGLISH IS COMMON TONGUE IN HOSPITAL DUE IN PART TO NUMBER OF INDIAN OR PAKISTANI DOCTORS AND NURSES. DO NOT BELIEVE ARABIC ESSENTIAL FOR TEFL INSTRUCTORS, AND WE UNDERSTAND ENGLISH INSPECTOR ALREADY KNOWS ARABIC. SHOULD WELDING INSTRUCTOR BE FOUND, HE WOULD BE IN SIMILAR POSITION TO BRITISH VOLUNTEERS, WHO HAVE HAD GOOD RECORD HERE WITHOUT PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF ARABIC. WHILE HOSPITAL MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR NEEDS ARABIC, HIS ARRIVAL DOES NOT HAVE TO BE KEYED TO BEGINNING OF SCHOOL TERM AS IN OTHER CASES.

5) POSSIBILITY THAT ONLY 6 PCVS CAN BE RECRUITED HAS ADVANTAGE OF REDUCING SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS. MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IS ARRIVAL OF VOLUNTEERS SUFFICIENTLY IN ADVANCE OF START OF SCHOOL SO THEY HAVE TIME TO SETTLE IN WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE MINISTRIES, ADMINISTRATIVELY AND PROFESSIONALLY. BOTH EDUCATION AND HEALTH ARE ABLE AND WILLING TO LEND ALL ROUTINE SUPPORT REQUIRED, AS LONG AS THERE IS NO RUSH AT LAST MINUTE. RECOMMEND THAT VOLUNTEERS IDENTIFIED THUS FAR BE PROGRAMMED TO ARRIVE BAHRAIN AROUND SEPTEMBER 15, RECEIVING AS MUCH OF TRAINING PROGRAM AS THAT SCHEDULE ALLOWS. HOSPITAL MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR WOULD BE EXCEPTION AND SHOULD COMPLETE FULL TRAINING PROGRAM.

6) REMAIN HOPEFUL PC CAN STILL FIND QUALIFIED WELDING INSTRUCTOR AND ONE TEFL INSTRUCTOR. HOWEVER, MUST KNOW ONE WAY OR OTHER BY JULY 15 AT LATEST SO LOCAL OFFICIALS CAN PLAN ACCORDINGLY. WHILE ABOVE MAY REQUIRE HANDLING OAHRAIN VOLUNTEERS SEPARATELY FROM

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RTHOSE GOING TO OMAN AND YEMEN, IN VIEW OF SMALL NUMBER INVOLVED, RELATIVE SOPHISTICATION OF BAHRAIN COMPARED TO OTHER TWO COUNTRIES AND NEED TO HAVE VOLUNTEERS HERE BY START OF SCHOOL, BELIEVE SUCH SEPARATE HANDLING WOULD BE JUSTIFIED.
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